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GORDON, HUNTER & DUNCAN

SOLICITORS

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14, Piccadilly,
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1924?

Dear Miss Kitching,

MISS MASON, DECEASED

Many thanks for yours of 17th and the enclosures. I enclose the engrossment of the Affidavit ready to be completed by Miss Parish. She should attend before a Commissioner (most of the Solicitors in Ambleside are Commissioners) to be sworn. The Commissioner's fee will be $6/6$ for which we enclose Postal Order.

I have sent a draft Affidavit on the lines you suggested to Mr Costley-White, asking him whether he is disposed to make it.

As regards the Fairfield Mortgage, - the deeds should be sent to us in order that we may prepare the necessary Release. Did you arrange this with the Solicitors, as mentioned in my previous letter? Enclosed in ~~stamped addressed envelope~~ yours faithfully,

W V Gordon

Miss Kitching,
The House of Education,
AMBLESIDE.

~~See Sept 10th~~ A summary of Miss Mason's philosophy is given in the enclosed Synopsis. The chief points may be stated as follows & the whole work of the School & of the College with its Practising Schools is based upon them.

Practising
THE CHILD IS A PERSON with all the powers of mind & body that he will ever have; he lacks only knowledge & experience.

Therefore: (a) there is no such thing as the child-mind,
 (b) the child's powers must all be used for, -
 (1) he has a natural aptitude for know-
 ledge &
 (2) an unlimited power of attention.

As a corollary to this, in order that his mind may grow it must be fed.

Miss Mason's work was to show that these ends were not served by

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(1) an education limited to the three R's
~~plus~~^T vocational training for the workers' child,
 or (2) social accomplishments for the child of
 the rich
 & that they were hindered by,
 (3) oral teaching on the part of the teacher,
 (4) the use of text-books (except in the case of Mathematics & Grammar) which imparted information only.

For she taught that every child being a person is entitled by birthright to a liberal education, & that a liberal education means

- (1) that the mind must be fed with ideas & not information &
- (2) that these ideas must touch upon all that concerns the nature of child or man.

Therefore Miss Mason said,-

EDUCATION IS THE SCIENCE OF RELATIONS,- the relation of child or man to God, to himself & his fellow men, & to the natural world around him.

Consequently, a liberal education must be devised to cover all these relationships.

So in 1891 Miss Mason started The Parents' Union & later in the same year, The Secondary Training College for teachers known as the "House of Education" in order to educate children from the age of six & girls up to eighteen upon these lines & then to carry on the education of girls, training them for any guardianship of children to which they might be called as parents or teachers, but chiefly as teachers.

The possibilities of Miss Mason's work lay in her discovery of the nature of mind.

Hitherto the mind has been considered

- (1) as a sac. to hold ideas, or,
- (2) a part of a child's nature which could only be examined by means of intelligence tests, so-

called 'child-study' etc.

Whereas Miss Mason taught that mind was, so to speak, a spiritual organism which like the body fed upon suitable food & starved upon unsuitable,

that

1. that it fed in order to grow (not to know),
2. that it could only feed upon vital food, not food that had been prepared or predigested any more than could the body,
3. that a literary form & first-hand knowledge was the only banquet upon which mind could grow.

The accompanying programmes of the Parents'

see sheet

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Union School & the prospectus of the College shew in detail how all the subjects are covered both in the School & College.

The work is done by independent study from the very first & does result in the ability of both children & students to grasp amongst other things, to grasp the sense of any passage of varying length according to age, a page at six years old to six or seven pages at a later age, after a single reading.

The students of the College carry out the programmes in the Practising school & later in their posts while the the children of the P.U.S. work in home schoolrooms all over the world & in secondary & Elementary schools in England - some 40,000 altogether.

The students of the College are in great demand, so great that all ex-students are supplied with work however long they have left College.

The College by 1924 expect to receive many new entries for 1925.

Miss Mason made provision for her work to continue under those whom she had trained for the work (see the accompanying report issued by the P.M.U. for 1923) The Ambleside Council has been formed, a Constitution drawn up which ~~has been~~ was slightly revised at the September Council Meeting & which will be ratified at the meeting next January. The work is growing. Already the College has more entries than vacancies for January 30th 1924 & a number of entries for January 1925 while the Parents' Union School shows a steady increase in numbers. It is now issuing its 98th programme of work for Jan 1924.